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ABSTRACT

This booklet provides basic, practical information to assist adults in helping young children to resolve their conflicts with each other. Following introductory information, the booklet discusses why conflict occurs between young children, focusing on children's ability to respect the rights of others, control expressions of anger, assert themselves in a socially acceptable manner, and share ideas and listen to the ideas of others. In the next section, appropriate expectations of children's behavior are detailed for children under 3 and for 3- and 4-year olds, including expectations of social interactions, sharing, self-assertion, and anger. Guidelines for planning the environment and activities to minimize conflict between children are presented next, including, for example, suggestions for modifying an environment that is too noisy and over-stimulating, too crowded, or inadequately equipped. The next section offers guidance for adults on handling conflict situations. Dialogues representing conflict situations are presented and discussed, including dialogues showing a child learning to assert herself and a group decision made regarding play involving conflict and violence. Advice on dealing with the child who is often involved in conflict situations and on working as an ally with the child is provided. Concluding comments urge adults to take the role of nonjudgemental mediators in conflicts between children, and sample dialogues presented tnroughout the booklet exemplify the adult in this role. (AC)

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